

## Minidoka Pilgrimage

All interested persons are encouraged to register for the 2006 Minidoka Pilgrimage that will take place July 7-9. Registration for the Pilgrimage is scheduled to close June 24. Forms for registration and other information are available at [www.minidoka.org](http://www.minidoka.org).



Four Cots, Minidoka Barrack.

As part of the Pilgrimage, the former internees, their families and friends will travel from Seattle and Portland to the former Minidoka War Relocation Camp in Idaho near Twin Falls.

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## Civil Rights Corner

This fall, voters in Washington State will likely face anti-immigrant ballot measures. Initiative 946, for example, seeks to deny public benefits to individuals who cannot prove their immigration status.

JACL board member and Civil Rights Committee co-chair Devon Abdallah sits on the steering committee of From Hate to Hope, the statewide coalition working against anti-immigrant ballot measures. From Hate to Hope hosted a community briefing and training on April 22. Immigrant advocates from a broad spectrum of communities showed up to strategize and mobilize against anti-immigrant sentiment.

See "Civil Rights" on page 3

## JACL Youth Movement

The Seattle JACL Youth group is seeking young, energetic and committed people to get involved!

Though youth movements across the nation have struggled, the Seattle JACL Youth movement is gaining momentum. Members of this revitalized youth movement are committed to building an inclusive community, educating peers about social justice issues, and building coalitions with other youth communities.

At this time there are ten members who represent students from the community colleges, high schools, the community and a newly formed "Nikkei Group" at the University of Washington.

If you are interested in joining the effort, please email Kyle at [redacted]

## JACL at the Summer Festival

Seattle JACL will have a booth and something fun for you and your family at the Chinatown-International District Summer Festival on July 8 from 11 - 8 PM and July 9 from 11 - 6 PM.

Originating in 1975, the Festival has become the largest Pan-Asian American street fair in the Pacific Northwest with over 100 booths featuring arts and crafts, local businesses and community organizations.

Included at this year's Festival will be the 4th Annual Karaoke Idol contest along with lion and dragon dances, taiko, drill team exercises and much more, presented on the Dragon Stage at Hing Hay Park, 409 Maynard Ave. S. Vendor booths will be located between S King St. and 6th and 8th Ave. S. Admission is free.

For more information about this event please contact the CIDBIA, [events@cidbia.org](mailto:events@cidbia.org), (206) 382-1197.

## National Convention and Seattle Chapter Resolution

*There is still time to sign-up!*

From June 21-24, the 76th Biennial JACL National Convention will take place in Phoenix, Arizona. The registration deadline has been extended until Wednesday, May 31. You can find more information at [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org) along with additional information on the agenda, workshops, booster activities, and other details.

As part of this year's Convention, the Seattle Chapter and the JACL Pacific Northwest District Council will be bringing forth a resolution to support our District wide

See "Convention" on page 3

## Workshops on the Internment

Last summer, the Education Committee submitted a grant application to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to present workshops on the Japanese American internment and how it relates to today's attitudes towards Arab Americans. We were awarded a \$30,000 grant to present these workshops across the state for each of the Educational Service Districts (ESD) in Washington. Of the nine ESDs in our state, five chose to host one of our workshops. In order to get the word out to as many individuals as possible, several private schools around the state were also offered the workshop.

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www.jaclseattle.org  
email@jaclseattle.org

SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



by Doug Honma, President

*"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free..."*  
— excerpted from "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus (1883)

The recent immigration marches of April 10th and May 1st are bringing back some memories for me. My mother is herself an immigrant—a shinissei who came to the United States in 1970. She met and married my father and established permanent residency here and began a new life in the suburbs of Portland.

Twenty-five years later, my cousins from Japan came to visit my family in the United States. I was in high school at the time and in the midst of visiting colleges and we took a college tour/sightseeing road trip starting from Portland all the way to Los Angeles.

I strayed from I-5 quite often, wanting my cousins to see more than what could be seen in the city and from the Interstate. My oldest cousin, Musashi, kept looking at a map during the trip as he traced our travels down the west coast.

Before he returned to Japan, he said to me, "America really is a big country." Those words have stayed with me ever since that trip.

I'm not entirely sure if he meant simply that or something more profound. During his trip, he had seen homes that were massive in comparison to Japanese standards and expanses of farmland without people or buildings for as far as the eye could see. All the while, he traced where we'd been along the map, always knowing that even though we'd traveled a distance that would stretch from the northern point of Hokkaido to the southern tip of Kyushu, he had only experienced a mere sliver of America.

America really is a big country.

It seems to be commonly accepted that our immigration policy needs change and undoubtedly, what is contested is the direction in which our new laws will lead us. There are many in this country that wish to close us off and prevent those from outside our borders from "taking our jobs" ranging from lawmakers and activists to those who have written things

like "America doesn't owe immigrants anything! If you don't like it, get out!" on the backs of their cars.

Essentially the same has been said in the halls of Congress in the form of draconian measures to eliminate due process and criminalize those pursuing a better life (H.R. 4437) and also in our local political dialogue in initiatives that seek to deputize every social and community service provider into a customs enforcement official (I-946).

Of course, these kinds of attitudes are nothing new to our community. We endured much the same when our community's role in the American social fabric was similar to that of many new members of our society today—as farmers, as laborers, as domestic help.

The motivation behind the formation of the JACL was to address nativist legislation and sentiment and show that we were just as American in heart as anyone born on this land. The organizing and marching we see today is just a contemporary version of the same.

There seem to be few, if any, easy steps or answers towards crafting an effective and just immigration policy especially after economic factors enter the picture. Nevertheless, we need an approach that will:

- Honor the civil and human rights of all within our borders;
- Provide clear and just pathways for people to progress towards legal residency and citizenship;
- Examine immigration from a wider scale such that it reflects the economic forces at work inspiring people to come and;
- Allow people to feel safe to be visible enough to seek out the resources they need to avoid exploitation and abuse.

As the people of a nation as large, wealthy, and powerful as ours, we need to remember where we came from and how we got here, imagine what our families experienced and endured in their earliest days in the United States and think of what could have been or should have been different without the cries of those saying that we did not belong.

America really is a big country and the hearts of its people need to be big as well. Tens of millions of people here with us today depend on it.



## Pilgrimage, continued from page 1

The Pilgrimage is symbolic of the passage made sixty-four years ago when nearly thirteen thousand people of Japanese ancestry, many of whom were already American citizens, were removed from their homes and sent to a distant and desolate internment camp.

Three years of incarceration laid ahead for the internees and today Minidoka continues to hold a mixture of memories and strong emotions—feelings of denial, distrust, shame and joy. The 33,000 acres that once made up Minidoka has been taken over by farms. However, in 2001, 73 acres along the North Side Canal and near the original entrance to Minidoka has been designated a National Monument.

Participants will have two chances to visit the grounds of the National Monument. On Saturday, there will be guided tours of what remains of the former site. On Sunday, a memorial service will be held at the National Monument to honor internees. Participants also have the opportunity to participate in workshops and forums during this time. Throughout the duration of the trip, there will be opportunities to share memories and stories.

We encourage all participants to register as soon as possible to ensure seating on the bus. The price for the Pilgrimage including bus transportation is \$200 (75 and older: \$150). For those making their own way to Twin Falls the Pilgrimage is \$75 (75 and older: \$65). Once in Twin Falls, everyone will have access to transportation to and from Minidoka and other events.

Please note there is a Civil Rights Forum at the College of Southern Idaho, Herrett Center in Twin Falls held prior to the Pilgrimage on July 6 and 7 with nationally known speakers/authors/historians/attorneys such as Roger Daniels, Eric Muller, Peggy Nagae, Dr. David Adler, Dr. Robert Sims and others! Details can be found on [www.minidoka.org](http://www.minidoka.org) and [www.csi.edu/herrett](http://www.csi.edu/herrett).

For more information about these events, please contact Alan Momohara at [minidokapilgrimage@comcast.net](mailto:minidokapilgrimage@comcast.net).

## Convention, continued from page 1

Strategic Planning Process. This process will identify a clear vision, goals and strategies to remain an effective, relevant and fiscally viable civil rights and cultural/educational organization into the future.

The Strategic Planning project builds upon the National JACL "Blue Ribbon" Committee's recommendations, commissioned by President Floyd Mori, which will incorporate Chapter, District and National JACL to implement a comprehensive strategy and secure funding for long-term success. We will be requesting the necessary funding for our efforts at this time.

For more information, please contact Jeffrey Hattori at [redacted] or Joy Shigaki at [redacted]

## Civil Rights, continued from page 1

JACL co-sponsored the April 10 march and rally in Seattle for immigrants rights. JACL supporters also participated in the May 1 immigrants rights events, marching with a united delegation of Asian and Pacific Islander organizations.

In other initiative news, opponents of the recently passed Anti-Discrimination Bill filed Referendum 65. The Anti-Discrimination Bill bans discrimination based on sexual orientation; R-65 seeks to repeal that portion of the state's human rights commission jurisdiction. JACL supported the Anti-Discrimination Bill and opposes any attempt to repeal it. The Seattle chapter is lending its support to Washington Won't Discriminate, the statewide coalition that will be fighting R-65 this fall.

The JACL Civil Rights Committee will also be drafting background papers on racial disparities in the education system during the upcoming months.

*Stay tuned for more civil rights updates!*

## Workshops, continued from page 1

Teachers are genuinely interested in knowing more about this topic and students were also anxious to learn more about Japanese American history and its relationship to today's world. The ESDs in Yakima and Olympia actually garnered enough registrants to hold the workshop. Thus far, Mt. Spokane High School, Our Lady of Fatima, Overlake School, and Pacific Crest School have also hosted a workshop.

We've been fortunate enough to find former internees willing to tell their stories to an audience of students and primarily teachers. May Namba has been one of our most reliable speakers. She tells of her experience of losing her job with the Seattle School District at the start of World War II, when the district decided that the secretarial staff and lunch room workers might sabotage the children's safety, to her experiences at Minidoka and post war cities.

Other speakers on the internment have been Kazzie Katayama, Shigeko Uno, Nobie Takahashi, Don Maekawa and Tom Kometani. We also bring members of the Arab American community to our workshops to tell of their experiences since Sept. 11, 2001. Students and even adults often have stereotypes of people from this group and through these workshops the Sikh Coalition along with Arab American groups have brought reality to the audience. Both the history of Middle Eastern immigration and stories of discrimination and fear show the human side to the headlines.

Our work is on-going, but the need to tell our story is important. It is a reminder to students that they must never let what happened to the Japanese Americans happen again in our country.

## Announcements

**Jun. 21-24** – Biennial National JACL Convention; Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Spa and Resort, Phoenix, Arizona; Information: [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org).

**Jul. 7-9** – Minidoka Pilgrimage; registration deadline June 24; contact: Alan Momohara, (253) 838-8495, [minidokapilgrimage@comcast.net](mailto:minidokapilgrimage@comcast.net).

**Jul. 8-9** – Chinatown-International District Summer Festival, street fair with stage presentations at Hing Hay Park, 409 Maynard Ave. S, FREE; contact: CIDBIA, [events@cidbia.org](mailto:events@cidbia.org).

**Mission Statement:** The Seattle Chapter JAACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

**Chapter Board Meeting:** Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S, Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Doug Honma prior to the meeting.

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**Article and Event Submission:** Board members should submit materials to the editor [redacted] by the Friday after the monthly board meeting. Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

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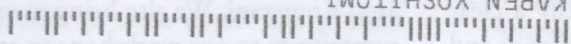
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